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A video recorder programming device has a telephone interface and includes telephone answering machine functionality and video recorder programming functionality. The device operates, by default, as a telephone answering machine. When a user enters a programming code using the telephone keypad, the device switches to a video recorder programming mode and prompts the user to enter a channel number, start time and a stop time or duration. The device stores the received programming data and, in the programming mode, allows the user to edit or delete the stored data.